

U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
712 Swift Boulevard
Richland, Washington 99352

Attention: Mr. Larry Gadbois

Dear Mr. Gadbois:

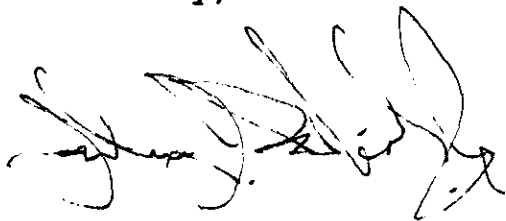
I find it incredible that the Richland Office of the Department of Energy does not know how to treat the sludge currently residing in the K-Reactor basins. They have known about this sludge since about 1991 which prompts the question, "what in the world have they been doing in the past eight years?"

I firmly believe the interim remedial action statement regarding the clean-out of the K-Basins should indeed include permanent disposal of the sludge as well as remains of the fuel elements. If the plan does not cover permanent disposal of the sludge, but rather provides for interim storage, I can well see these containers of sludge sitting around for decades before someone finally decides to do something with it. Under no circumstances should the DOE be permitted to store this material until a "later time".

There is supposed to be a vitrification plant built at Hanford in the near future, and I see no reason the sludge could not be removed from the basins, dissolved and added to the materials scheduled for vitrification.

I truly believe this sludge should be disposed of at the same time as the fuel elements. In simple terms, "get rid of it now, rather than handle it twice".

Sincerely,



John J. Wick, Jr.

